Frequently Asked Questions

Voluntary Furlough Program

Eligibility FAQ’s

1. How do I know if my department is being considered for the furlough program? All departments are eligible, however, it may be easier for some departments to approve over others. It will depend on the workload and if employees are deemed essential workers.

2. How will I know how many weeks I can be approved for? When you fill out your application, you would indicate what weeks you want to take as furlough. Then you send your form to your direct supervisor for approval and then to your Vice President or Dean. Once fully approved, it comes to Human Resources who will send you an email letting you know what was approved.

3. Under what circumstances could the voluntary furlough be denied by a supervisor? If the work you perform is critical to operations and it cannot be picked up by other employees or your supervisor.

4. Do grant-funded employees qualify? No.

5. The announcement sent to the university states “eligible administrative staff” will be offered a voluntary furlough. Can you clarify who is considered administrative staff? Staff, both exempt and non-exempt, are eligible for the program. Faculty are not eligible.

Program FAQ’s

1. How would an employee know whether it is a good idea to volunteer to go on furlough or not? They should have a conversation with their supervisor to determine the feasibility of the program as it relates to them.

2. Can voluntary furlough be taken after July 31, 2020? At this point in time, the program is only being offered until July 31, 2020.

3. Does it have to be consecutive? No, the weeks do not need to be consecutive. However, the time must be taken in full week increments.
4. Does it have to coincide with a pay period?
   No.

5. How long will it take to get back on the payroll?
   There will be no delay in getting back onto the payroll. The Department of Human Resources will be processing the furloughs directly into Banner. Web Time Entry should not be utilized for furlough time.

6. Would my check really have an impact on the budget gap?
   Yes, every amount is helpful.

7. Is there a percentage of each department that will be required to participate in this program?
   No, it is strictly a volunteer program. There are no requirements on departments for participation rates.

8. Since voluntary staff furloughs need to be approved by the supervisor, what will ensure supervisors are not targeting workers they feel are unnecessary?
   Since this is a voluntary program, participation is initiated by individual employees. Supervisors will be making decisions based on workloads.

9. If a staff member applies for the voluntary furlough, is there a "cooling off" period where the staff member can change their mind?
   An employee can change their mind. However, we do ask that at least a week notice be given to Human Resources to ensure timely processing of payroll.

10. As a manager, what do I need to know about the process and what is my involvement?
    As a manager, you have to decide how to manage workloads and what applications to approve. Employees submit the forms directly to their manager, who then has to approve or deny the requests. The forms then need to be sent to the area VP or Dean for final approval. Complete forms should then be submitted to hr@njit.edu.

11. If I submit a request for a voluntary furlough, what is the expected turnaround time for me to receive an approval or denial?
    It depends on how quickly the manager makes a decision and moves the form through the process. However, approval/denial applications have been moving through the process within a day or two.

12. Is a voluntary furlough for a semester an option for an instructor?
    No, faculty and instructors are not eligible for this program.

13. Will benefits be maintained during this period?
Yes.

Future Furloughs and Protection FAQ’s

1. If an employee opts into the voluntary furlough and a mandatory furlough is later enacted, will the employees' earlier time in furlough count towards any involuntary furlough? Or will they not be eligible to be furloughed again?
   There is no mandatory furlough planned at this time, however, if an employee volunteers for a furlough now, and the university implements an involuntary furlough program, the employee would still be required to serve the involuntary furlough.

2. Are there any other sacrifices or losses besides my salary for 2 weeks?
   No.

3. If I decide to voluntarily do the Furlough Program and there are not a lot of people that participate, will my job be in jeopardy?
   The university is looking to programs, like the Voluntary Furlough Program, as a way to help the budget situation. Our hope is to avoid other measures such as involuntary furloughs and fiscal based layoffs.

4. Would I be given any written documentation confirming the fact that my job will be there for me when I return?
   This is unnecessary since there is no impact on individual jobs for people taking the furlough. Think of it like taking an unpaid vacation.

5. Is it possible to use vacation days for furlough as a way to contribute and perhaps protect a job position?
   No, vacation time cannot be used during a furlough. In order for the university to save money, and for employees to be eligible for unemployment benefits, the time must be unpaid.

Benefits, Seniority and Time Accrual FAQ’s

1. Will I still have health insurance during this time and when I return to work?
   Yes. If you are enrolled in health insurance, it will continue while on furlough and when you return to work.

2. Will NJIT stop payments to my 403-B during this time?
   Payments will stop while you are off payroll since they are based on a percent of compensation but will resume when you return depending on the amount of time you take while on furlough.
3. While on furlough will I (and NJIT) continue to make contributions to my retirement plan? How will furlough impact retirement contributions?

If you furlough for more than 2 weeks in a month, payments to your 403b will not be made and you will not earn credit for that month. If you furlough 2 weeks or less in a month, payments will be taken when you return to payroll.

4. Is the pension payment waived while we are on furlough?

While you are off payroll, pension payments will not be taken. Payments will need to be made when you return from furlough.

5. How will it affect pension loan payments?

Loan payments are made directly to your carrier and will continue while you are on furlough.

6. Will I have to pay anything back once I’m back on payroll?

NJIT is paying your health insurance while you are on furlough. If you have other deductions, you will pay those back when you return.

7. How do voluntary and mandatory furloughs impact the earning of sick time, vacations, seniority, and years of service?

Employees on furlough will not accrue sick or vacation time. Seniority will not be impacted. Years of service can be impacted if an employee takes more than 2 weeks furlough in a month.

8. Will NJIT pay out unused vacation time that furloughed staff will be unable to use if they are furloughed?

No. NJIT will not pay for unused vacation time.

9. How do voluntary and mandatory furlough impact FSA savings plans?

A furlough does not impact FSA savings plans. Deductions to these plans will be made upon return to payroll.

10. Will employees on furlough still be covered by the NJIT life insurance policy?

Yes. Employees on furlough will continue to be covered by NJIT’s life insurance policy.

Unemployment
1. I do not live in New Jersey, am I qualified to receive unemployment benefits in my state? Regardless of whether you live in New Jersey or out of state, applications for unemployment should be made in New Jersey.

2. How much income will I receive through unemployment? Unemployment benefits are administered by the state and all determinations are made directly by the states. We encourage you to review the Department of Labor’s website to become familiar with the benefits. Currently, unemployment is paid at 60% of your salary up to a weekly maximum of $713.